

THE SITUATION.

"Read! Mark! Learn! and Inwardly Digest!"

SPEECH

— OF THE —

HON. EDWARD BLAKE,

— BEFORE THE —

Young Men's Liberal Club of Toronto,

— ON —

TUESDAY EVENING, JANUARY 13TH, 1884.

Mr. Blake, on coming forward was greeted with round after round of cheering. He said :—Mr. Chairman, ladies, and gentlemen,—It is always a great privilege to a public man to be permitted to express, to any portion of his countrymen, his sentiments upon the public affairs of their common country, but I confess that it is with peculiar pleasure that I avail myself of the opportunity given me to address a meeting under the auspices of the Young Men's Liberal Club of Toronto. (Applause.) I have always regarded the politics of a free country, as the noblest occupation of the citizens of that country, and I have always believed that it was essential to the fullest development of the nobler part of politics that there should be an early apprenticeship on the part of the citizen to that, his noblest duty. It has always been my earnest wish, therefore, that the young Canadian should, at a very early time in his life, begin that active interest in politics which it is the part of every good citizen to take, and, as long ago as ten years or more, I took an opportunity of making a proposition in that sense, and based upon that view, for the enlargement of the franchise of Ontario, which resulted in the adding of a very great number of young men all through the rural parts of the Province to the rolls, who otherwise would have been for a long series of years excluded from the franchise, and which resulted, further, in increasing the number of the electorate of Ontario to a point higher than in any other Province, except one, which possesses

manhood suffrage. I think the results of that legislation have demonstrated its wisdom. (Cheers). It was based upon the proposition that the franchise was, when properly viewed, an elevating privilege, and that it was, therefore, of the last consequence that at the earliest period at which the process of reflection and argument were available, the citizen should be trained to the exercise of the franchise. Now, I have said that I regard politics as

THE NOBLEST OCCUPATION OF THE CITIZEN.

and yet I have been especially anxious that the young should early take a part in them; because, although they be the noblest occupation of the citizen I know it is often defiled, and it is very important to all of us that the generous aspirations of youth should mingle with our efforts, and it is all important that the youth of the country begin to participate actively in the politics of the country and do so upon sound and elevated principles. They should aim high. They must remember, as we all ought to remember, that there may be dear-bought victories, and that it is better to lose in the right than to triumph in the wrong. (Loud applause.) They must as youth will, I think, be only too willing to do, agree that the end does not justify the means, they must be willing to assume as their rule of action in politics that no double conscience should divide the man and the politician. (Loud applause.) Now, we are living under a free system of Government, which is worked upon the principle of party. There are many men who lay to that

principle the great and admitted evils which permeate our political system. I am not blind to those faults, nor am I blind to the fact that the excess of party zeal tends largely to produce them. I see—we have all seen—incapacity and even crime condoned; I have seen fraud justified; I have seen a loose code of morality embraced; I have seen legislative iniquities—such, for example, as the Gerrymander Act of last session—(loud applause) approved and applauded; and I have seen all these things done largely in the name and for the interest of party. (Applause.) But I say that these are not inseparable from the principle of party government. (Applause.) I say that such things as these are, some of which might have been paralleled in the history of English representative institutions, would be impossible in the England of to-day. Notwithstanding the severity of party strife, notwithstanding the acrimony and bitterness which unhappily prevail, and have for the last few years, prevailed in England, the things to which I have referred are impossible there. If you want proof of it take the Redistribution Act now or shortly to be placed before the English Parliament and the Redistribution Act—so-called—passed in the Canadian Parliament of 1882. Look at the principle of action prevailing in one case and in the other. Look at the fact that in one case the power of

A PARTISAN MAJORITY

was deliberately used in order, if possible, to crush the minority out of existence, while in the other the principles of redistribution were agreed upon by the mutual assent of the two great parties (loud applause), and you will see that in a country in which party government prevails, justice and equity, and honor, and liberal notions may yet also prevail. So with reference to the general code of political morality. Contrast the English code with that observed in Canada. Contrast even the code of the United States with that observed here—far inferior as that is to the English. Look at the case of Colfax; look at even later and larger cases which I might name, and see for yourselves once again that party spirit does not necessarily annihilate the sense of honor or justice. And, after all said, party government I believe to be inevitable, for the reason that you will have an organization at any rate on the side of the Government. The Government of the day, to whatever views it may adhere, is the nucleus of an organization. It holds place, power, patronage, and has the machinery for consolidating its adherents, and it does not seem to me possible that there should be any effective check upon the course of government unless there be an organized party in opposition. Nor am I able to advise any better means for the ascertainment of a true, and sound, and reasonable

view of things than that discussion which goes on when measures are treated from opposite points of view by a Government and an Opposition. But I say that the thing has its evils and grave evils, that it is liable to abuse and great abuse, and that the young who are entering upon the discussion of political affairs, and are taking their part, should recognize that, and, in the spirit which you, Sir, intimated a few moments ago, engage in the discussion of political questions, from an independent standpoint, and with an earnest desire to reach the true, the sound, the just conclusion. For my own part, I have been some seventeen or eighteen years in public life. I have sat for some three or four and twenty sessions in one House or the other, and I have never given a vote or pronounced an opinion which I would ask my constituents or my fellow-countrymen to approve of or condone because it was a party vote or opinion. [Loud cheers.] It is upon the merits of those votes and opinions that I have attempted, and ever will attempt, to vindicate their soundness. I rejoice, I need hardly say, in the establishment of this club. I hope that its membership, large though it be, as you have just mentioned, will be more than doubled within a short space. [Loud applause.] It ought to be, in a city of this magnitude, more than doubled. I hope you will proceed to justify by your activity your existence. You have to

SET AN EXAMPLE.

There are many other places in which Young Men's Liberal Clubs may well be established. There are places in the country in which it is better to adhere to the old system of old and young going together, in which it is difficult to get sufficient members conveniently close to one another to establish different organizations. No such difficulty exists here. There are many other places in which no such difficulty exists, and where numbers, and convenience, proximity are such as to enable different organizations to be formed, and in these places I favor the formation of numerous organizations. You have work before you, studying the public questions of the day, preparing yourselves by practice for the discussion of those questions upon the platform; you have the practical work of carrying your opinions and convictions to a successful issue by taking that part which knowledge and trained activity can take in the organization of your party—in seeing to the registration of the votes, seeing to getting out the votes, seeing to the formation of a sound public opinion amongst the masses of your fellow-citizens and electors. There is in this city, Conservative though it be, a great Liberal force. (Loud applause.) There is a Liberal force sufficiently strong to do great things

even in Toronto. There is a Liberal force strong enough to be of great and valuable assistance in spreading Liberal principles and carrying them to a successful issue in the surrounding constituencies. We Reformers of the Province of Ontario must never forget what I am frequently reminding you of from the platform that our force amongst the people is relatively greater than the force which the so-called Redistribution Act permits the people to send to Parliament on the Liberal side. You must not forget that under all the unfavorable circumstances of the late election, circumstances which I shall not now particularize—our political force compared with that of our opponents was almost as 45 to 40, as evidenced at the polls. You must not forget that the popular force, great as it was then, is greater now, that not many months elapsed after the general election before that series of events began which have been sounding even in unwilling ears the truth of the views which we have been pressing upon the people, and that, at this time the subjects which formed the principal topic of debate at the late election are discussed in altogether a different spirit, and that altogether a different temper prevails in the ranks of the adversary. It is

IMPOSSIBLE FOR THEM TO APPEAL

any longer to certain apparent facts as proving beyond controversy the soundness of their policy. From a period within a few months after that election had taken place, and up to the present day, circumstances have been accumulating, facts have been coming forward, events have been precipitated upon the minds of the impartial and the intelligent in favour of the conclusion that a mistake was made in 1878 and repeated in 1882. (Loud cheers). I maintain that the almost even balance which existed between the political parties in Ontario in 1882 has now been reversed, and that the preponderance of sentiment is with the Liberal party. I cannot forget, nor can I lose the present opportunity of referring to losses which we have sustained. Within the last few days we have sustained grievous losses. We have lost from the ranks of our party, from our fellowship as citizens, two men who were well known to most of you, and whose reputation had spread far beyond the bounds of the city which they called their home. We have lost James Bethune and William Johnston. They were young Liberals, not so long ago, and early in their lives they assumed a prominent place in the councils and ranks of the Liberal party. In 1871-72, those critical years in our Provincial history, James Bethune valiantly contested and won the County of Stormont, when it was of the last consequence to the Liberal party that not a county should be lost. I, at that time, engaged actively as I was in these Pro-

vincial politics, felt under great obligations to him for the course he took. In the year 1882, ten years afterwards, when the Liberal party, crippled by the Act to which I have referred, and by an election precipitated upon it unexpectedly, was forced without preparation to enter into the contest, William Johnston volunteered for the fray. He offered to take charge of the organization of Ontario for the election, and he labored, as few men have labored, as few men could labor, through that contest and the one which followed a year later. We owed to them gratitude for their services in the past, we owe to ourselves not to forget in any short time those services, but to keep their memory green. (Loud applause). They were both, besides being political friends, personal friends of mine. They both happened to be students in my office, and to have received their professional training there, and therefore I feel as one who has lost two of his best personal friends, and as a public man share with you the feeling of sorrow for their loss. I trust that

THEIR NOBLE SERVICES

will remain enshrined in your hearts, and that the lesson they taught us will not be forgotten. They took an active, honorable, noble, manly part in the political life of their country. They worked while it was to-day and, may we not say of them as it was said by a great man of political friends gone:—

"From the eternal shadow rounding,
All our sun and starlight here,
Voices of our lost ones sounding,
Bid us be of heart and cheer,
Through the silence, down the spaces,
Falling on the inward ear.

Let us draw their mantles o'er us,
Which have fallen in our way,
Let us do the work before us,
Cheerily, bravely, while we may,
Ere the long night-silence cometh,
And with us it is not day."

(Loud and prolonged applause.) Now, Mr. Chairman, there are many topics, each of which deserve a speech by itself, which I might address you upon. There are many questions of a most pressing character. The constitution under which we live was settled, unfortunately, without an appeal to the people, without that threshing and sifting, and crucial discussion in Parliament, in the newspapers and at the polls, which it would have undergone had that appeal been taken. It was settled very largely by a public man, who was avowedly of the opinion that it was a mistake, that the union should have been a legislative, not a federal union, and it bears unmistakable marks of that handiwork. There are defects and inconsistencies which would not have appeared had it been submitted to the test of public discussion. You have alluded, Mr. Chairman, to one defect—the Senate. As Senate, we have—we, living in a democratic country, in an age of democratic principles—a

legislative body not elected directly or indirectly by the people, but appointed by the First Minister and appointed for life. The Senate was said to be, when first established, the representative of the sovereignty of the Provinces, and the special protector of Provincial rights. And yet the members are appointed by the person against whom (on the theory of protection for the Provinces,) that protection would be needed. (Loud applause.) The First Minister of Canada, whoever he may be, controls the majority of the House of Commons and the legislation of the country. He infringes, we will say, upon Provincial rights, and the Senate is to guard against that—and yet he appoints the watch dogs. (Loud laughter and applause.) Now I say we ought to have a Senate responsible to and elected by the people—(great applause)—small in numbers, and with proper checks and safeguards which have been devised and which could easily be made to avoid those difficulties which the great objector—there is always an objector to every change—says will arise through having an elective Senate. There is another thing. The Provinces have the power to revise the Constitutions and to amend them in all respects except in that which concerns the link between them and the Federal body—the Lieutenant-Governor. But the Dominion of Canada has no power to

REVISE HER CONSTITUTION

at al. Neither the people nor the Parliament of Canada can amend the Constitution, either with reference to the Senate or anything else. I maintain that that is a great disadvantage. (Cheers.) We ought to have inherent in us the power to revise and amend our Constitution as from time to time may seem necessary, with proper safeguards, no doubt, for the rights of the Provinces, as they exist in the United States. At the present time, no matter how much you might like to change the Constitution, you do not know that it would be done, for it is dependent upon the action of the Imperial Government and Parliament; and no matter how much you might desire not to change it, the change might be made because it depends upon the action of that Government and Parliament. Then there is another thing, which grew, I believe, largely out of the circumstances to which I have referred respecting the adoption of the Constitution and that is the division of the judicial powers. We have the large body of our laws made by the Provinces. These ought to be administered by the Provinces which make them. The Courts are created by the Provinces, but the judges are nominated and paid by the Federal authority. It is an utterly illogical and absurd mode of managing the matter. (Cheers.) I maintain that when you have a legislative body which makes the laws, you ought to have in

the same Province the power to administer those laws by means of Provincial officers responsible to the people whose laws are to be administered. (Loud applause.) Then we have the great question of Provincial Rights, which may be summed up, perhaps, in the question of the principles upon which the disputed power of disallowance should be exercised. To what end is it that you have a Local Legislature, and that go through the turmoil of Local elections, to send representatives to that Legislature to make laws if, in those matters which are confessedly within the jurisdiction and the exclusive jurisdiction of that Legislature, and in those laws which do not effect the general interest of the Dominion, your legislation is not supreme? (Cheers.) I say it would be better for you—because the truth is always better than a sham—to

HAVE A LEGISLATIVE UNION AT ONCE

than to submit to a power of revision and disallowance of law upon those subjects which are committed exclusively to you as a Province, and your laws on which do not affect the general interests. (Applause.) The principles of responsible government are violated at their root by such disallowance. If such disallowance took place in England or Canadian legislation we should be aflame, and should insist that we ought to govern our own affairs, and the same rule applies as between one of the Provinces and the Dominion as applies between the Dominion and the Empire, with reference to domestic legislation. Even though we have a written Constitution, a large part of the Constitution is unwritten, and depends upon the spirit in which it is interpreted and administered. That is the case, as you know, entirely, as to the British Constitution, which is unwritten. In this question of disallowance it is all important to understand the spirit in which you should expound our Constitution. Expound it on the federal principle on which it is recited, that it is made, and you will reach one conclusion; expound it in the spirit of legislative union, and you will reach another. That is not a question for the lawyers, therefore it is not a question for the Courts, but it is a high and important and yet very plain question for the people at large to settle at the polls. (Loud cheering.) Look for example at the question of granting licences for the sale of intoxicating liquors.—(loud and prolonged applause)—and you will find in that a proof of the propositions I have just been advancing. You will find an effort made at Ottawa to construe your Constitution in a centralizing spirit which minimizes the attributes of the Local Legislature and magnifies the attributes of the Federal Legislature. But, when we find that ever since the Constitution was a Constitu-

tion for the seventeen or eighteen years in which we have been living under it, the Local Legislatures acted upon the right to make laws upon a particular topic, and the Central Legislature did not interfere with the exercise of that right, can we ask more cogent or plainer proof of the understanding of the people as to what the meaning of their Constitution was? I ask whether, except in case of urgent and absolute necessity, a meaning which was expounded by 18 years' practice should he attempted to be violated? Well, it was attempted to be violated, and upon the very doctrine to which I have referred—that of necessity. It was announced to us that

THE LAWYERS HAD FOUND OUT

that we were all wrong, and that our Constitution made it something wholly different from what we all, except a few of us, one being the late Minister of Justice of Canada, had supposed, and that now it was found that the jurisdiction was at Ottawa, and not with the Provinces, and that of necessity we must act. We disputed that proposition. We said that nothing of the kind had been discovered, and we said more—supposing you are right, and the jurisdiction is with the Dominion, what we ought to do is to take steps to make the Constitution agree with the common sense of the people as to what it was, instead of proceeding to violate that common sense. [Loud applause.] We were told nothing of the kind shall be done, our amendments were expelled, and a law was passed, based upon the idea that such a law was necessary, taking the control of the liquor traffic, so far as could be done, into the hands of the Dominion. Then the next year the event which we anticipated came to pass, and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council decided that the local laws on this subject had efficacy and vitality—were not the waste paper we were told in the city of Toronto they were. (Loud and prolonged cheering.) Then we pressed upon them to repeal their law, since the argument of necessity was shown to have no force. No, the second act of the drama was gone on with. We were told that, as a matter of policy, this law should be kept upon the statute book, if by some hook or by some crook, some cunning device of the lawyers, the jurisdiction could be held by the Dominion, though the Province had adequate jurisdiction. An arrangement was made for a statement of a case to the Supreme Court to ask its decision upon the question, and it is only this morning you have heard that the unanimous judgment of that tribunal in all the disputed points, the point with reference to the liquor licenses, except wholesale and vessel licenses, which may be put to one side, the law of the Dominion is void. (Tremendous applause.) Now there, you see, we have triumphed under the Constitution. But

I want to say to you, to-night, on the very night of that triumph, that the most important question is the other one which I put to you—the question of policy. In what spirit shall we act at Ottawa? Shall we, after it has been established, after eighteen years experience of all the Local Legislatures, that a particular attribute is theirs, and when it has been decided by the Courts that they have that attribute, struggle to deprive them of it? ("No, no," and applause.") Shall we go on litigating further if we can, by some hook or crook, to find something that shall take away that power from them and give it to the central authority? I say, No. (Cheers.)

THE TRUE UNIONISTS

in this Canada of ours, with its sparse population, with its diverse nationalities and interests, are they who recognize the principle of local laws and local powers in the widest and most generous spirit. (Loud applause.) I say that it is by recognizing the fact that the people in a vast area of territory can most effectually legislate for themselves in the great masses of questions, that we shall promote a real union in those things in which we have really a common interest. And, if there be one instance above another in which local excitement, local opinion is important in deciding the expediency and efficacy of law, it is upon that question in which the attempt had been made and will be persisted in, I fear, to take away the power of the Local Legislatures and legislate for the whole Dominion at Ottawa. (Loud and prolonged applause.) I congratulate the Liberals upon the series of triumphs which have attended their efforts to establish the federal principle and to enforce federal views. But, I say to them their work is not done, so long as these persistent efforts to minimize that principle go on, and that we must set our faces as flints against these aggressions which have been made in the past and will be persisted in in the future, and that our doing so is essential to the prosperity of this Canada we love. Now, Mr. Chairman, there are other questions upon which I would say a few words, because I have to deal with some pressing questions which have been before us for some years—are before us this night for decision. There is the question of

COMMERCIAL TREATIES.

We have believed for a long time that it was extremely important that we should enlarge our foreign markets. Both parties have agreed upon this. The party in power proclaimed that it was one of their most earnest objects to enlarge our foreign markets by making arrangements with divers countries. They have been in power for a good many years and have not succeeded in taking the first step as yet in the enlargement of the market. (Laughter and applause.)

On the contrary, the markets seem to be narrowing rather than enlarging. I have argued that an important step towards success would be the

DIRECT NEGOTIATION OF COMMERCIAL TREATIES.

(Loud and prolonged applause). My opinion is that there are business affairs which are best managed by those who know most and best about the business. They involve discussions with reference to advantages and disadvantages. The commercial and fiscal policy of England differs widely from ours; their lives are different, their views are different. It is necessary only to look to their public despatches upon analogous questions to observe. We have found it stated in Parliament that we just missed a most advantageous convention with France by twenty-four hours, because our then Agent-General at Paris had to refer it to the Foreign Office in London. Before the answer came the happy moment was lost, and the treaty was lost too. That has been stated by the First Minister at Ottawa, yet he says it would be a great harm for Canada to have power to negotiate treaties direct. In that case it would not have been harm. It has been said to me, How do you expect you will be able to enforce your treaties by war unless you negotiate it through the medium of the British Ambassador? Well, I never should propose to enforce a commercial treaty that way. (Applause). I am rather a man of peace myself, at any rate, but the idea of insisting that, if a commercial convention is broken, you will go to war about it, seems to me perfectly absurd. (Applause). It is said that we are too small to engage in commercial treaties advantageously. It depends upon the advantages of a treaty whether we will negotiate it or not. It does not depend upon our size, which is respectable, our numbers which are considerable, or our trade which is not to be despised, but upon the question whether the other party thinks it is a good bargain to enter into or not. It seems to me the arguments against our position are entirely fallacious, and that common sense and experience alike indicate that a step in advance would be taken if Canada had the power to make her own commercial treaties, (Loud applause.) All these things, however, these constitutional questions, and those affecting the future of our country, we shall settle wisely and well if we recognize the great leading principles upon which we should govern. I have said that for Canada one of these is the full and ample recognition of the Federal principle. And I say generally that for Canada, as for the Provinces of Canada,

THE DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLE

is the second great principle. We are not to forget that we live in a democratic

age, and that we are one of the most democratic products of that age. (Applause.) All over the civilized world, for the last twenty-five years, it has been plain to the observer that there has been approaching what is called the reign of the common people. Ever since the series of revolutionary movements which agitated the continent of Europe a few years ago, it has been marked, even in those old-world monarchies, buttressed round as they were by the great feudal buttresses and ramparts, and overborne as the people were by heavy taxation and enormous forces of armed men, as the great movement that has been going on. And here in this happy land, these difficulties have never supervened, you have had no feudal ramparts to batter down; no standing army to overawe you; no great aggregation of wealth or power in few hands; no hereditary aristocracy, no reason why here the democratic principle should not be applied. (Loud applause). It may go upon two lines, and upon this continent both are being tried—the presidential system on the other side and the system of British freedom, which, for my part, I have approved and advocated as being in this country. It is being tried here under circumstances more favorable than at the moment exist in England, yet in that Old World you see how strong the democratic spirit is. Within a few days the great Prime Minister of England will have consummated that grand measure under which the electorate of the United Kingdom will be increased from three millions to five millions. (Great applause). You will see a representative Government always, when there was a great question to be decided which moved the heart of the people democratic, but still under ordinary circumstances, aristocratic under the great power of the peers and the unhappy arrangement of the electorate districts and the restricted franchise, which subsequently became plutocratic, and is to be now democratic by the combined effect of enlarged franchise and satisfactory redistribution of electoral districts. (Loud cheers.) Now the democratic principles has the greatest possibilities for good, and whether we believe in it or shrink from it, we have to face it. If the experiment has got to be tried, then, that it may have a chance to succeed to the uttermost—and all good men wish it to—it is our duty, and especially is it the duty of the young and active, to see what are the dangers to be guarded against and what are the real principles to be enforced. (Applause.) The division of wealth, not by communistic law, but by those happy conditions which prevail here, the repudiation from the statute book, and from those statutes which are shrined in the hearts of the people of the law of primogeniture; the distribution, as a rule, of a man's wealth equally amongst his children; the abolition—which I

am radical enough to advocate — of the law of entail;

A WIDELY DIFFUSED EDUCATION ;

an intermingling of the people ; the effacement, as far as we can efface them, of class distinctions in our midst—all these things are points to which we should look carefully. and which true Liberals, anxious for the success of the democratic principle, should seek to achieve. I attribute the greatest importance to the intermingling of the people. I feel that we ought to be as I have said, an educated people, and being educated, readers of books and newspapers, capable of forming and expressing an opinion, we ought to feel our common citizenship the strongest tie that binds us, from the man who happens to be wealthy to the man who happens to be poor. I hope that in this Young Men's Liberal Club this example is set and that the Club will be a common meeting ground where the young mechanic, the young student, the young clerk, and all other classes in our community, possessing that happy gift of youth which has fled from me, may meet together as young citizens of Canada, and on an equal footing as young Liberals and citizens, learning to respect, esteem, and admire one another, no matter what the texture of the cloth in the coat, recognizing the identity of country and the identity of interest. (Loud applause). What should the democracy believe with reference to the great principles of freedom? I have no new-fangled doctrine to present to you, but I want you to remember there are three great freedoms which have been wrested from unwilling hands in olden time, and which are preserved to us—freedom of opinion, the most valuable of all, freedom of person, and freedom of property—a well-ordered liberty, the right to do what I will with mine own, but not the right so to use it as to hurt my neighbor. What does freedom of property embrace? It embraces, as one of its most essential elements, the right to exchange that property which I have (whether it be mine by the labor of my hands or the fruits of my accumulated labor or of that of those who preceded me) for what I want. (Applause). The right to deal with whom, for what, and where I please. (Applause). And here we get

A PLAIN DIVIDING LINE

between the parties of this country. We Liberals are charged, in reference to our fiscal policy, with neglect of the interests of labor and neglect of the interests of capital. If you were to believe that personage to whom you, Sir, have alluded,—[laughter]—you would suppose that we were insane enough to seek to persuade the people to a policy of des-

truction, as I have said, of the interests of labor on the one hand, and of capital on the other. I have no hesitation in saying to you that there is one test which I have always sought to apply when I have desired to consider what the material condition of a country was, and that test was—What is the material condition of the lowest class of honest labor in that country? If I find the lowest class so fairly paid, that there is enough for the support of a man and of those dependent upon him and some to lay by for a rainy day, I know that I need inquire no further—[applause]—because I know that all above that grade must be well off, unless you establish a false scale of civilization, which I am disposed to call luxury. You may in the effort to “keep up appearances,” as it is called, have a great deal of genteel miserv. [Renewed applause.] I have not much sympathy with that. It is from the point of view of the standard I have just shown you that that I have always considered the fiscal and tariff policy of this Administration. I want to lay before you a few of the points on which I think that policy wholly indefensible. It is a good time to do it, and I will give you reasons from the adversary as well as from the friend. They are anxious that we should not discuss this matter now. They want us to discuss Imperial Federation, Independence, Annexation, Commercial Treaties, anything at all except the condition of the country (Laughter and applause). A little while ago they wanted us to talk of nothing else but the condition of the country. (Renewed laughter) They wanted to put us down by pointing to what they said was prosperity. They said, There's no use arguing why or how, are you not well off? Would you not be fools to make a change? To-day they would be only too glad to draw any red herring across the trail. (Applause). They ask us then, Show us your policy. We have had always an affirmative as well as a negative policy—not only as to the tariff but also as to that other great question, the railway and North-West administration. And to-day we are quite ready to continue that discussion and to let it be judge by the light of events, whether the promises they made, the professions to which they gave utterance, the views they expressed and to which they induced the people to assent, are sound, and whether they have been verified or falsified by events.

I HAVE OBJECTED TO THE POLICY,

first of all, in a leading point, that of specific duties. I objected to that from the very point of view I mentioned a while ago, the incidence of the tariff upon the poor and the rich, and I have pointed out from many a platform what the effect of a specific, as contrasted with an *ad valorem* duty, is

that it compels the poor man out of his poverty to pay more than the rich man out of his wealth. But it is not necessary for me to do so this evening, because sometimes, fortunately for us, our Ministers visit England, and whether the ocean has some effect in making them forget what they have said on this side of the water, I know not, but they give utterance to truths on which they are silent on this side. I am to-night prepared to establish my proposition with reference to the injustice of specific duties, from the mouth of the Finance Minister. (Hear, hear). He was talking in England to some merchants who were anxious, from their point of view, that he should establish specific duties on our own goods. This is what he said:—"They had adopted specific duties wherever it was possible; but where there was a difference in the value of the article, such as in the case of cotton, where there were the cheaper and the coarser kinds, anything where there was great difference of value, if they charged so much upon the pound, they were liable to the accusation that they were imposing the same charges upon the poor man using a cheap article as upon the rich man who could afford a dearer article." The murder is out. (Great laughter and applause). That would be heresy on this side of the water, but it is logic, good sense and truth in England. The Liberal party objected also to the incidence of the tariff upon prime necessities of life. We objected, amongst other things, to the coal and breadstuffs duties, because they were both necessities of life, and that one of them was in one sense directly, and flour also, for that matter, was a raw material of manufacture, that these taxes bore heavily and unjustly upon the poorer classes. I am not going to argue that out, for again I shall read you a short passage which proves my case. It is the language of a Minister:—"If it had been the object to devise a tariff that would set one Province against another—that would create and perpetuate sectional jealousies and antipathies, the Government had certainly succeeded. Breadstuffs were to be taxed to please the people of Ontario, but he believed it was a great injustice to the agriculturists of Ontario to suppose that they were prepared to accept such a tariff, or that it would be protection to them. The market where their surplus product was disposed of fixed the price of the whole, and duty could not be of any positive advantage so far as the price of their breadstuffs was concerned. Their duty would be a great obstruction to trade all throughout the country, which should, in accordance, with the true principles of commerce be left as unrestricted as possible. Not only would the tariff be worthless to the people of Ontario, but it would be most burdensome to other sections—to

fisherman and the great masses of people of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, as well as Quebec, for it is a well-known fact that large quantities of breadstuffs are yearly taken into the latter Province from the United States. Then, as part of this great "National Policy," a duty was imposed on foreign coal as a means of propitiating the people of Nova Scotia. Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Quebec, were taxed to satisfy Ontario, Quebec, Ontario and New Brunswick were to be burdened to please a minority in Nova Scotia. Nothing could be more calculated to create dissension and to disturb the harmonious working of Confederation than such legislation." Would you not have thought I was reading from the speech of some Liberal. But it was really a speech of Sir David Macpherson. (Loud applause and laughter). But it was made a good while ago. (Renewed laughter). It was made when he was an independent member

HE BOASTED MUCH

of his independence then, and later on he said he sat in the Senate not as a party man but to speak the views he conscientiously held. He spoke the truth, as I believe, and he spoke his independent convictions as I presume, and they remain on record, fortunately for us and unfortunately for him. (Laughter and applause.) He has changed his place since then—and he has changed his opinions. (Applause.) It is for you to judge whether you will pay most respect to the changed opinions of the office-holder or to the independent opinions of the Senator. I agreed with him when he made the speech, I agree with him to-day, but I differ altogether from the Minister of the Interior. We have objected, Mr. Chairman, to the rate of taxation. They told us that they were going to give us a readjustment and not an increase of the tariff. They were simply going to adjust the burdens to the strength of the back. What has happened? In 1877 you used, according to the returns, \$96,300,000 worth of goods imported. But I have to take off a considerable number of millions, because the accounts were kept in a different way from what they are to-day, and certain imports are not to be counted. It tells against me, but we must be fair. The net amount of goods imported for use was about \$91,600,000. On that you paid duty in round numbers of 12½ millions. That is between 13 and 14 per cent. for everything, free and dutiable, you used within the year. In 1881 you also used \$91,600,000 of goods—the same value. How much duty did you pay under this tariff, which was to be a readjustment, and not an increase. Eighteen and a half millions; about 20 1-5 per cent., or about fifty per cent. of an increase. (Applause.) For every

dollar you paid in 1877, on the same value of goods you paid \$1.50 in 1883.

Mr. James French—Those goods were specially for the rich.

Mr. Blake—And so neither you nor I bought any of them. (Laughter and applause.) We objected to the gross amount of the taxes also, because it was said the gross amount was not to be increased. We had been told that it required about thirteen millions from customs, and five millions from excise, to carry on the affairs of the Dominion. Take the three years 1876-7-8 under the Mackenzie administration. The aggregate collections by customs were \$38,150,000. In 1881-2-3, under the present Government, the customs collections were \$63,000,000, an excess of almost twenty-five millions, or nearly two-thirds more in the latter than in the former three years. (Cheers) We objected to the surplus. It was one of the grounds of glorification with the Ministers for two or three years. They are not talking so much about it now, because there is not so much of it. (Laughter.) It was not so in old days. I have often pointed to a statement of Sir Charles Tupper, made when Sir Richard Cartwright estimated a modest surplus of half a million dollars. Sir Charles rose, and in indignant terms denounced him for proposing to take more from the people than he expected to spend. It was of no use for Sir Richard to say that he was not sure that he would get as much as he had estimated, or that he would be able to keep the expenditure down as low as he had estimated, and that half a million was not an unreasonable margin to ask on the large transactions of the Dominion. Sir Charles replied that he should do as they had done, and as the Government in England had done—lower the taxation so that there should be no surplus. Such was the patriotic Sir Charles, when in opposition talking about a surplus, which I am sorry to say, was not realized, of half a million. The Government of which he was a member actually collected surpluses in 1881-2-3 of \$17,400,000. I agreed with Sir Charles in principle in 1873, though he was pushing the principle too far to refuse to allow the Finance Minister a margin of half a million. When you find us agree it may be a reason for doubting us both. (Laughter and applause.) But I am of the same opinion, while Sir Charles has changed. [Applause.] What did the First Minister say during the election of 1882? He said:—"I never knew a man grow too rich to please himself, and it is the same with a country; in fact, my belief about surpluses is the same as the old squaw's about whiskey. She said a little too much was just enough." [Laughter.] How does a man grow rich? By saving his money, not by spending it. Does the country grow rich by having a large quantity of money in the treasury taken

from your pockets and mine? [Applause.] It is a simple process to call upon you to pay money into the treasury, and he says the country can't grow too rich—in that particular way. [Applause.] I say the more you put into the treasury in that way the poorer you make the country. [Great applause.] The national wealth is that in.

THE POCKETS OF THE PEOPLE.

(Applause.) The collecting of a surplus is a great evil. It leads to extravagance. (Applause.) It takes away means which in a country like ours we require to carry on the business of the country. (Cheers.) One of our great difficulties is the high rate of interest, and when the Government takes away money at four per cent. which is required to carry on the business of the country, and which has to be replaced by money borrowed from the banks at seven or eight per cent., an additional injury result. By the time the consumer had paid for this surplus it cost about thirty millions. For, mark you, the amount in the treasury does not gauge the loss to the people. The money is paid to the Customs by the importer. He must charge a profit on the whole cost of the goods, including the Customs duties. The retailer pays that and he also charges his profit on the whole amount of the goods, including the amount the wholesaler paid, and the profit upon it, so that by the time the goods reached the consumer the money given would be not less than fifty per cent. more, or thirty millions. Had that amount of money been left with the people, instead of being taken from them, the present stringency would have been in a large measure averted. (Applause.) Well, they make a number of excuses when they talk about this matter. Sir Leonard Tilley, as you know, is great on calculation. [Laughter.] I'll tell you how he does it. He says it is unfair to compare the gross amount of taxation now with that under Mr. Mackenzie. I am willing to compare them, and find how much it is per head. Mr. Mackenzie didn't tax you enough. I will add what I think he ought to have taxed you. Add a certain number of millions, divided by the number of the population, and it is so much per head. I come to my time, and I calculate the population on the rate of increase that I think ought to have taken place. Do not ask me to divide that into what I taxed you. Why? Because—the surplus. I must deduct that. I did not spend that in carrying on the ordinary business of the country. Where did you spend it? Well, in the Pacific Railway. I won't count that. So he averages the figures and divides and shows you that your taxation is really less than you paid under Mr. Mackenzie. [Loud laughter.] I fancy that some of us would be glad to settle the accounts of our debts in the

same way. The accounts would balance most satisfactorily. I suspect that you paid the surplus as much as the rest of the taxation, and I suspect you are not going to get that money back. The money is paid, gone, spent, sunk, and I am going to charge Sir Leonard Tilley with it to the Day of Judgment. (Applause.) We objected to

THE INCREASED SCALE OF EXPENDITURE.

There was a great cry of economy raised in 1877-78. You were told that Mr. Mackenzie was a profligate administrator of your funds, that he filled the public buildings at Ottawa with partizans who needed offices, but who were not needed in the public service, and that he spent other hundreds of thousands in erecting a new building, which also he filled with useless clerks. You were told that not so much as was spent by the Reform Government was needed to carry on the business of the country. There was no suggestion of increased expenditure. Sir Leonard Tilley said that he was opposed to the increase of the tariff from 15 to 17½ per cent. I shall give you a few items of the expenditure of 1878 and 1883—the former they thought bad, the latter they thought good. The amount spent on immigration in 1878 was \$180,000, and in 1883, \$437,000. Then there were the superannuations. You know that besides paying our civil servants while they serve us, even after they stop serving us, we pay them annuities and they live a long time. We pay them a good deal of money in that way. Mr. Mackenzie paid \$106,000 in this way in 1878, and Sir Charles Tupper, at Halifax, when Mr. Jones was running in an election there, said:—"I am not going into details. There is the amount, \$106,000. for superannuations. It bears corruption and wilful extravagance on the face of it." If that is so, what amount of corruption is there in \$186,000, for that is the amount paid by the Conservative Government for superannuations in 1883. There is an estimate for about \$200,000 for the year just passed and for the current year, I suppose, it will increase still further. (Loud applause.)

	1878.	1883.
Fisheries.....	\$ 93,000	\$ 168,000
Miscellaneous.....	81,000	238,000
Indians.....	421,000	1,106,000
Mounted Police.....	334,000	477,000
Ottawa Police.....	10,600	18,500

I have the pamphlet of Sir David Macpherson, in which he devotes a good many pages to the extravagance of the Mackenzie Government in connection with the administration of justice. That expenditure was \$564,000. It was \$615,000 in 1883. Excise in 1878, \$215,000; in 1883, \$279,000. And now we come to the

DEPARTMENTAL SALARIES AND CONTINGENCIES,

in connection with which Mr. Mackenzie

was alleged to have committed so many crimes. The expenditure in 1878 was \$703,000. That is a large amount, I admit. They reduced it to \$556,000 in 1883. (Loud laughter and applause.) Take one instance. When Mr. Mackenzie was First Minister, he was Minister of Public Works, which included the Railway Department. When the present Government came into office they divided the Department into Railway and Public Works Departments. Under Mr. Mackenzie the expenditure was \$59,800. The two Departments in 1883 cost \$108,000, although it is only fair to say that \$7,000 of that was upon an account not included in Mr. Mackenzie's time. The net cost, however, was about a hundred thousand dollars, or nearly double that under Mr. Mackenzie. Under these circumstances, who can wonder that the public expenditure, which they said in 1878 would average for the next five years, if they got into office, twenty-two millions, rose from twenty-three and a half millions in 1878 to twenty-eight and three-fourth millions in 1883. I believe, although, of course, we have not the Public Accounts yet, that it was about thirty millions in the year just passed. In fact, you can mark the trail of the Tory Governments by this item. From 1868 to 1874 the expenditure increased ten millions; from 1874 to 1878 the rate of expenditure was at about a standstill. From 1878 to 1884 there is an increase of about seven millions. I do not say that all that expenditure comes out of your pockets, because part of it is balanced by receipts. I do not say that all the increases are wrong. I say now, as I said when in Government, that in a growing country like ours there must be increases. But, admitting all that, how does it justify these men, who condemned the \$200,000 increase of Mr. Mackenzie, and said that if they were placed in power they would do better. When I charged them with extravagance, what was their reply? They said the difference between us and you is that we've got the money. You allowed them to tax you. They did it. And now they give as a reason for not carrying out their promises that they have taken this money from you. This question of expenditure and taxation is a serious one. I want to bring it home to you. Unless the people will appreciate the direct interest it is to each of them it will not assume the importance which it should assume. Take the statistics which are furnished to the Ontario Bureau of Statistics by the labor organizations of this city for last year. Returns have been obtained from 291 mechanics with families, numbering in all 1,089 souls.

THESE WERE PICKED MEN.

First, they belong to the trade organizations, which comprise, as a rule, I believe, the best of the workingmen. (Applause.) In the second place, they kept

accounts, and the workingman who keeps account and knows what the wages are from year to year and how his money is spent, shows his superiority over the average citizen. (Applause.) If the workingmen would keep a little pass book in which should be carefully noted what he spends and what he receives, it would solve for them many important problems concerning which the politicians now persuade them to wrong views. The results as shown by the reports of these 291 picked men were as follows:—

Average earnings.....	\$455 01
Extra earnings.....	10 06

Total.....	\$475 07
Average living expenses.....	454 75

Average saving.....	\$ 10 32
---------------------	----------

So that the saving were about equal to the extra earnings of the wife or one of the children. The regular wages of the head of the house were absorbed as living expenses for the year. We usually calculate five to a family in Canada but in these cases the dependents were not up to the average. These families averaged only about 3½ members. So, having regarded to that fact, and having regard to the peculiar character of the men, there could be no doubt that in other cases where the families were larger and the men not of the same degree of carefulness all that was earned even in that year was spent. It was clear I regret to say even in 1883, as a rule, it was all the mechanics could do to live. The question with the mechanic always is, "What wages can I get for my labor; what can I exchange my labor for? It is not a more question of how much money can I get, but what food, clothing, shelter, education for my children, and other necessities can I get for the labor of my hands?" It is clear that in 1883, which the Conservatives say was a prosperous year, it was not prosperous for the mechanic. Steady employment was what was wanted. The average number of days in which these picked men worked was 244. If you allow for Sundays and holidays there were 60 lost days. The average allowance made by English authorities for sickness is 9 days in the year, and assuming that even in our healthier climate, and under our more favourable conditions, the average is the same, there are still over fifty lost days. So there was an enormous loss for want of employment. How is it this year? Our city, as you know, is exceptionally prosperous. Various circumstances have combined to lead to that gratifying result. I believe that

TORONTO HAS PROSPERED

more than almost any other city on the continent for the last three years, certainly far more than any other city in the Dominion; and we are considering the operation of the tariff in its practical

results under exceptionally favorable circumstances for those who allege that it produces prosperity. Times are harder this year. Look at this city, at Hamilton, London, Dundas, Ottawa. Take last year, again, remembering what I have told you. The wages of a picked mechanic are \$465. What is deducted from those wages as Dominion taxation? The revenue from customs and excise was twenty-nine and a half millions. If you allow five to a family, you will find the taxation was \$35 per head. But, as I have pointed out, that is what went into the Treasury, and what we actually paid was about 50 per cent. more, or about \$50 per head. What proportion will this \$50 bear to the whole income of \$465. It is ten times the saving of the picked man. It is more than a tithe of the whole income of \$465. It is half as much again as the rate in the old days of which they have been telling you. This is the taxation, which these gentlemen have been telling you, and which some of you believed, you did not feel at all. (Applause.) Now, I say a tax bears more heavily on the poor than on the rich. (Loud applause.) The rich may burn fifty tons of coal and pay a tax of \$25, and not feel it. The poor man burns five or six tons and pays a tax of \$2 50 or \$3, and what is it? It means a third of the average savings of these picked men. I ask those who found they could not make both ends meet. I ask those picked men who could only save a trifle, if they would not have been better off if the load had been lightened, as it might have been lightened, and which was not lightened, in order that a surplus might be accumulated. (Loud applause.) They tell us that they gave prosperity to all classes, farmer, manufacturer, mechanic, and the Finance Minister declared that that prosperity would last for ten years. He advised the people of this country to clasp all sail for ten years of prosperity, to speculate, buy, sell, to believe him that his fiscal policy and the great arrangements he had made assured a clear commercial sky for ten years. We took his advice. [Laughter.] We speculated, imported, manufactured.

WE BOUGHT OURSELVES RICH

in the North-West. [Loud laughter.] They brought on the election at the height of the season of apparent prosperity which, by these and other means, they had created. Only last year, when I twitted the Finance Minister with this statement of his about ten years of prosperity, he said, "I said so, it's quite true, and I say still, that if our merchants won't import too much, and won't be too anxious to sell, we will have seven years more of prosperity." We were in adversity even then. He said

we were prosperous, however, and that we would have seven years more of it. Perhaps he meant that we would have seven years more of the same kind of prosperity we are having now. But that is not the kind that was promised. [Applause and laughter.] They did create a fictitious prosperity in some lines of business. They gave the manufacturers in some lines exorbitant profits, as, for instance, in cotton and sugar. We told them they would induce an excess of capital to seek these branches, that there would be a time of inflation, operatives would be collected in centres, and that after a brief period the market would be glutted, the mills would be idle, and loss would result to the capitalists, and lack of work to the operatives. That is exactly what has happened. Look at the condition of the cotton industry for the last two years. And it was only yesterday we learned that arrangements had been made to limit the production of the mills and so advance prices, in fact to form a cotton monopoly in order to make up their losses and to extricate themselves from the trouble in which they have been plunged. The Government declared in 1882, when they came before you for re-election that the boom which then prevailed was only the beginning of what was to be. They said that what was wanted was, and they came before the people earlier than was actually necessary to make sure of it, that the good times should continue. They wanted the people's endorsement of the policy which had been adopted to secure prosperity for all time. They said that millions of dollars were

HANGING UPON THE VERDICT.

and that if that verdict was favorable to the policy unexampled increases would take place in the money invested in the mines and other industries of the country. In this city the First Minister said:—

"I tell you this, and this is not a matter of supposition but of certainty and knowledge on my part, that there are millions of dollars waiting to be invested in Canada millions in England and large sums in the United States waiting to be invested in every kind of industry, in mines and manufactures of every kind. All that is wanted by capitalists in Canada, England and the United States, and in France and Germany, is to learn whether this country is of the fixed constant opinion that the N. P. shall be continued as settled in '78."

Where are the millions? (Laughter.) Now, it seems pretty plain that the millions never came. They said they would give steady employment to the labor at fair wages. Our market is small and soon stocked. As I pointed out to you a while ago, instead of opening new markets and instead of the policy being such as to enable you to open new markets those markets are being closed rather than opened. The export of manufactured goods for the last three years is

only about three-fifths of what it was for the three previous years I have been citing as examples. They boasted that they gave such temporary sunshine as there was, that it was due to them and their little Act of Parliament that you were rich and happy as you were. There was no use to point to the condition of free trade England or to that of the United States, where there had been no change in the tariff. There was no use in discussing the causes of action and reaction. I will give, as I have given in the rural parts, a figure or two which will show you upon what the prosperity of the towns depends—not of the towns alone, not of the country alone, but of both town and country. The farming capital of the Province of Ontario, including about one hundred millions for current capital is one thousand and fifty millions or more. The manufacturing capital is about eighty-one or eighty-two millions. Of this a large proportion is in the saw mills, bakeries, flour mills, and other industries which the N. P. does not help, however much it may hurt them. There remain about fifty millions about which there may be a dispute as to whether it hurts or helps. Now, do you believe that it is the prosperity of the fifty millions that is going to help the 1,050,000,000, or will it be the reverse? The larger figure rules, and what we depend upon who live in the towns—I am a city man myself, and interested in everything that advances the welfare of the city—in the prosperity of the country parts which buy our goods. When the farmer has a good crop and good prices for it, we profit by it as well as he. (Applause.) He buys the goods that we import or manufacture; he makes the wheels of trade revolve, and you will notice that the Conservatives themselves in their trade articles, and in their leading articles, too,

BASED THEIR HOPES OF GOOD TIMES

upon the crops. They were quite right: the crop was the important thing. I wish to show by another set of figures where the prosperity came from. Of the products of the land, in which I include forest land, we exported in 1876-7-8 products to the value of \$158,500,000. In 1881-2-3 we exported \$211,000,000, an excess of about \$53,000,000. That is, in the latter period we got four years' profits in three years of time. That is, enough to make a country prosperous. In the period of depression which the Conservatives are so fond of saying was the worst in the country's history the people were economising and investing their savings only in the safest possible way. With those savings and with the great addition to our wealth, of which I have told you, we ought to have prosperity. They said we should have it. But they have hindered it instead of bringing it about. It is the undue inflation, the fiscal bur-

dens, the enormous expenditures which these men are responsible for which have curtailed the season of prosperity, and have brought about another period of stringency. These men deny it. Sir John Macdonald, the other day, in England, you know, where these inconvenient things are said, issued a wholesale invitation to the English people to come out and stay with us. (Laughter.) He said that in Canada any industrious man could obtain a good day's wages for a good day's work. Contrast that statement with what comes to us in unquestioned reports. Look at the report of the labor organization of Hamilton of last winter:—

"November—Opened with a decreasing demand for labor in almost every branch of productive industry. During the month reductions of the working force were very general, greatly increasing the surplus of labor. General secession from work on all outdoor branches of labor took place toward the close of this month. Some slight reductions in time and rate of wages were also made and accepted. The month closed with a very poor outlook for the winter. Signs of still greater depression were especially evident in the panicky feeling among workmen, and their determination to curtail expenditure, thus hastening depression by an almost entire falling off in the demand for those manufactures not essential to support life, and the consequent discharge of persons engaged in the manufacture of such goods. This month may be summed up as a poor one for labor, for, although wages were much the same as last month, work was not so steady, and the number out of employment was largely increased.

"December—Opened with a still gloomier outlook for laborers. There were constant rumors of intended reductions of force, pay, and time, many of which proved correct. Among others the iron molders, one of the strongest and best organized bodies of wage-workers, were cut 20 per cent., and owing to the depressed condition of labor, they did not resist. This was followed by a wholesale reduction in the force engaged in the iron industry in general, and the stove industry in particular, amounting in the aggregate to something near 45 or 50 per cent. of the entire force employed during good times. The average wage of cotton operations were reduced from \$10 to \$7 per week, which was again followed by an almost universal shut-down or suspension of operations for an indefinite period—on the Saturday immediately before Christmas—with the exception of the boot and shoe, cotton, and glass industries. These continued fairly active, but otherwise the month closed with no demand, whatever, for labor of any kind. On the whole the month must be summed up as a very poor and discouraging one for labor. Many honest, hard-working people were compelled to apply for relief, and many letters appeared in the newspapers appealing to the City Council to undertake relief works, and the month may be set down as one of the worst months for labor, if not the worst, for many years."

THE TORONTO REPORTS.

Take our own city. What says the report of the Combined Charities for last winter? That report is signed by Mayor Boswell, the chairman. [Applause and laughter.] He says:—

"The large number of newly arrived and destitute emigrants seeking relief, naturally drew the attention of the Conference to the system prevailing of giving indiscriminately assisted passages at all seasons of the year, and thus flooding Toronto with pauperism throughout the long winter season. A

memorial was presented to both the Dominion and the Ontario Governments, asking that the practice might be discontinued, at any rate between the months of August and April in each year. Whether any further notice of the communication will be taken by those authorities remains to be seen."

Now hear the report of Mr. Pell, Secretary of the Combined Charities, as to the state of affairs this year. He says that the cases for relief this winter were 1,683, as against 939 up to the same time last year. He adds: "There are more men out of employment in Toronto now than during any previous year of my residence. St. George's Society assisted to relieve 1,400 persons, as against 700 up to 1st December, last year." Take another test—that number of vagrants arrested, many of whom came to the police magistrate, and want to go gaol because they can't get any other shelter. In 1882 there were 275; in 1883 the number increased to 339, and in 1884 to 439. Take the waifs—persons who go to the police station for a night's lodging, and are glad to sleep on the floor of a cell because they can't get better accommodation. In 1882 there were 879; in 1883 there were 2,016, and in 1884 the number had grown to 4,035. I am glad to say that, for the last three months of last year, it seems to have been only about the same, or perhaps a little better, than for the last three months of the year before. We know that this does not disclose the worst cases. We know that the worst and most heart-breaking cases are those that do not meet the public eye. Now, I say that the men who complain because these facts are disclosed, are not patriots. (Loud applause.) They say we are unpatriotic because we want to ascertain the

EXACT CONDITION OF THE COUNTRY

to see whether their policy is successful or not, and to see whether their promises have or have not been fulfilled. What did they do in 1878? On every platform in the country they told of men who had been brought upon the country. No Liberal complained of anything that they said which was true. That is all right. The people are entitled to know the facts. I give you the facts and my authority for them, and I say that these facts, painful as they are, demonstrate that the men who misled you into the belief that by Acts of Parliament and by taxation, they could secure you prosperity, have failed, and that a condition of affairs exists which is deserving of the attentive consideration of the people at large and which ought to be remedied at the earliest possible moment. (Loud applause.) I said they told you they would give you steady employment at good wages. Last session when we discussed the facts of the case, they had to some extent to withdraw from their statements. An important admission was made by the Finance Minister. He said:—

"A year or two ago, as I know and other honorable members know perfectly well as the prices paid for labor in the United States must regulate the price of labor in Canada, because if the wages are not about equal the operatives will soon pass across the line, our manufacturers found it necessary to increase the wages here when an advance took place in the United States, in order to keep their men; but now that there is a reduction in the United States, owing to reduced prices, our manufacturers, in order successfully to compete, have also, to reduce the prices of their products, and in some cases, also, the wages of their operatives."

There is an admission that notwithstanding their Acts of Parliament and their tariff arrangements the labor in the big markets of the United States regulates the market here. If a Liberal had said that—Unpatriotic man! (laughter) you are hinting to the mechanics and laborers of Canada to go across the line and better themselves. Of course a good Tory like Sir Leonard could not do such a thing—at any rate, it is not wicked when he does it. (Loud laughter and applause). Now, as a matter of fact no matter how we cloak or disguise it,

THE SYSTEM OF ASSISTED PASSAGES

as worked, has aggravated the evil. The Minister of Immigration may tell you that he has issued his rule for this or for that. I do not know what these rules are, but it is clear that the Department uses the steamship agents as its agents and these men are paid a commission on the number they send out. I believe that almost anybody who is not actually blind or crippled, who is apparently able-bodied, can get out to Canada on assisted passage. The immigration you want is of a special kind. You want the tenant farmer or the freehold farmer. You want, to a certain extent, the immigration of agricultural laborers. You may want an immigration of domestic servants, if you can keep them. There is a great want of household servants in the country, but immigration will not supply that. The women come from this country to the towns, and from the towns of Canada they go to the larger towns in the United States. The immigration must be so regulated that it shall not tend to aggravate the distress which now exists through the action of the Government. I suppose I should not be so apt to be called unpatriotic if I said with Sir John Macdonald that every industrious man can get in Canada a good day's wages for a good day's work. I can't say that and tell the truth, because I know the contrary. Every man knows that. The cases of the workingmen to which I have referred prove it. How different was the course of Mr. Mackenzie. He was never afraid to state the truth. (Loud cheers.) He was not afraid to let people know when it was not expedient that they should come to Canada. On 12th July, 1875, Mr. Mackenzie being then in England, our Agent-General, Mr. Jenkins, wrote a let-

ter to the London Times, in which he said:—

"Sir,—Will you permit me to make, the columns of the 'Times,' an intimation which may serve to prevent a great deal of disappointment and trouble. The advices, which I have from Canada, both privately and in the press, as well as from gentlemen who have lately arrived from there show that in the present state of commerce and trade in the Dominion, and especially at so late a period of the emigration season, it is not advisable to encourage the emigration from this country of artisans, mechanics, clerks, and general laborers to Canada. These persons, arriving in the middle of July or in the beginning of August will find a depressed state of trade and a lack of general employment, and unless they have extraordinary energy and self-reliance, or sufficient means to sustain themselves for a considerable time, they may find themselves forced to face a Canadian winter with no prospect of employment. To encourage emigration of such persons in such circumstances would be almost criminal, and equally disastrous to the emigrants themselves, and to the interests of Canada."

And so on. Now, there he gave the state of the case as it was. (Loud applause). He intimated a hope that he would be able to advise immigration at a later time. He got abused for it. Here is Sir David Macpherson's pamphlet, and in it he pitches into Mr. Mackenzie because he allowed that letter to be written. "Could anything be more ill-advised?" he asks, "or exhibit greater ignorance of the field which Canada offers for immigrants? This country is specially adapted for workingmen with large families." He was denouncing Mr. Mackenzie for suggesting that the classes of men named should not come to Canada. That was the

HONEST, TRUE STATE OF THE CASE

then. It is the honest, true state of the case with reference to the mechanic and general laborer to-day, and it is time that the truth should be told. (Applause). It is better to tell the people there is no room for them, when there really is none, than to have them brought over here only to be disappointed, to leave the country as soon as they can, and to write letters concerning us, which will do us more harm by far than the plain, straightforward truth told by ourselves can do. (Great applause). Even the case of the agricultural labourer is changed by the introduction of improved machinery, notably of the self-binder. A large portion of the labour formerly required is required no longer, and this should emphasize more than ever the view that it is not advisable to pay others to come into the country to share with our own workingmen the labour which is scanty enough already. And will not the members of the Young Men's Liberal Club do good work in impressing these facts upon the masses of the people. These are facts which require to be brought home to men's minds. If these facts were made familiar to the people it could not be but that a general protest would be made. We have a right to be proud of our legislative record with

reference to the workingman. We have placed him in a fair position in relation to his employer and the law. We did so in advance of the English legislation. We recognized the fact that it was essential in the interests of labour in its controversies with capital that it should be permitted to organize, and we removed the disabilities which then existed in the way of organizations and combinations. Strikes are evils, and the intelligent workingman recognizes them as such. But sometimes they were necessary evils. To have the right to act as a united body is absolutely essential to labor in these controversies with capital. I should like to have the young men of this Club devote their attention to other problems also—half social and half legislative in their nature. The question of co-operation in distribution and production is pregnant with importance. You see to what a great extent co-operation in distribution has progressed in England. It has gone beyond the retail societies, and now they have an enormous wholesale institution which supplies the retail societies. The transactions run up into the millions, and if their great experiment succeeds the relations of the laborer to the rest of the world will be almost revolutionized. Familiarity with the topic of co-operation and others of a like character is of the utmost importance to the young Canadian Liberal. We, as legislators, have to do with sanitary laws, educational laws, and with laws for regulating the hours of labor for women and children. And in all I want to say one thing to the young Canadian Liberals and one to the workingmen. I hope the workingman in Canada is not going to be satisfied with a less measure of progress in these important matters than that made in Old England. For eighty years the work of improving the condition of the workingman in these regards has been going on. For eighty years law after law has been passed as experience demonstrated its necessity. On the continent of Europe, also, great progress has been made in a few years. I hope we shall do as well even as they are doing in England. We should be ashamed to be behind them. We ought to be ashamed of such things as a statement made in Parliament, which, when it was made, caused me to be named that such a thing should be said in Canada. A gentleman on the Reform side was pointing out a diminution in the school attendance in Nova Scotia, and was answered by a gentleman on the other side, "Don't you know the reason of that? The

CHILDREN ARE BUSY IN THE FACTORIES

and can't go to school," [Applause.] Is that the sort of work we want done in this Canada of ours? Is that the way we expect to elevate the people to true

democratic principles? The young must be protected. [Cheers.] They must have time to grow strong and to be educated. England has passed through this stage, and, in the interest of the people, will not allow those things to be done of which this gentleman boasted. There are important questions beyond the pale of law. One is the inculcation of principles of economy and frugality and the spread of the system of keeping accounts among working men. I have before made a practical suggestion, which I was to repeat. I maintain that in our common schools we ought to teach the children the great masses of whom are the sons and daughters of farmers, mechanics, and labourers a simple method of keeping the daily accounts of the household or farm. It would be better than going on into advanced rules of arithmetic, which are never used after the person leaves school. (Applause). Economy and temperance are important questions, which are in your own hands. What I want to see is that mechanics and work ingmen should save something—should feel it their duty to save. Once the thing is begun, it is wonderful how you get on. To feel that he has something earned will make the mechanic an independent man, which he is not. For all this I do not except those things which are of a legislative character. There is much in a social and moral question which is beyond the legislative pale, but it is unquestionable that if you can mould your legislation in a more useful and beneficial direction, the higher the social and moral tone. It is not free trade nor is it protection, it is not competition nor is it the absence of it, it is not laws in our present state that will do, but the application to our daily lives of the principles of the Gospel is that which we ought to seek in making a country. [Loud applause.] It is the work of slow degrees. I may be called Utopian, but I believe that work is progressing, and will progress. It is our duty to set our faces toward it. We shall not reach high unless we aim high. Better aim higher than you expect to reach. With these considerations governing us as a people, legislation impossible and useless heretofore will become possible, and you will find social and moral considerations inextricably intertwine themselves with those of legislation.

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY.

It is too late to discuss the other topic of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and I shall not trespass upon your patience. (Go on, go on.) I should rejoice if I could lay my hand on my heart and say I was mistaken, and the policy of the Government would not bring about the results I thought it would. I believe the expenditure, the enormous rapidity with which the work has been put through,

the effect upon the North-west, the effect by reflex action upon the rest of Canada, could not be considered too serious or grave, and that an attempt is now being made to create a sort of boom, in the expectation that you will get your railway finished in the course of a few months, and that a new era of prosperity is about to set in. I wish I could tell you that I think there will be that era of prosperity. I am content that what I said should be recorded, that it should be read, and that in the course of a few short months, and after a year's experience of the road in actual use, you should judge whether I am right or wrong in advising what I did. I feel that the condition of the country is serious. I do not feel that we have cause for despair. I hope never to despair of my country. But we have cause for serious alarm. We ought to endeavor to awake our country from its lethargy, to show how far performance has come from promise, how woefully it has fallen short. We ought to show the real situation, exaggerating nothing. believing that our country will see that a policy of reduced taxation, of readjusted taxation, of economy in administration, of recognition of the Federal principle, and of Provincial rights; saving what remains to be saved, is the policy which ought to be adopted. She will see that the men who now govern her have proved unsafe guides, have proved unjust stewards, and that she will be prepared to remove from them the power which they have abused and to place it in the hands of men who

have shown themselves, when they had it, faithful to their trust, and declining, under difficult circumstances, to retain power by gulling the people. (Loud applause.) Who never said they would achieve for the country prosperity by the fiscal policy, and declined to endeavor to instruct the people in the doctrine that they could grow rich by taxation, whose thought rather was how to confine the limits of the Government within its proper scope, and told the people that upon your labor, intelligently, liberally, industriously and freely applied, you must depend for your wealth and prosperity. (Cheers.) I trust that this will be the verdict of the country when it shall be called upon, (Cheers.) I trust the young Men's Liberal Club have seen this night, I hope, notwithstanding its feeble advocacy, that their cause is good, that the issues are momentous; the propositions that they are to advocate are such as they can maintain on any platform that they are propositions in the interest of this country; not the propositions of charlatans, who pretend to be able to heal by quack remedies, but of men who point to the true sources of the evil and give the true remedy, which lies with the people. And so may I not exhort them:—

“ Press on ! the triumph shall be won,
Of common rights and equal laws,
The glorious dream of Harrington,
And Sidney's grand old cause.

Blessing the cotter and the Crown,
Sweetening worn labor's bitter cup,
And plucking not the highest down,
Lifting the lowest up.”